



Mr. Cooper's
S E R M O N
A F T E R T H E
EARTHQUAKE



Mr. Goodts



S. E. R. N.

AT THE

EARTH HOUSE

THE
*Danger of People's loosening
the good Impressions made by
the late awful*
EARTHQUAKE.

A
SERMON

Preach'd a Month after it happen'd.

By *William Cooper,*

Pastor to a Church in BOSTON.

Hosea, 6. 4. *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.*

Psal. 88. 10. *They kept not the Covenant of God, they refused to walk in his Law.*

11. *And forgot his Works, and his Wonders that he had shewed them.*

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Danger of People's Health
the good people are made by
the law of the

ARTIST GUARANTEE

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Very apt to wear off.

THEN Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, intreat the Lord, that he may take away the Frogs from me, and from my people : And I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord. -----

But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.

VERY famous in sacred Story is the Account of the Plagues executed upon *Pharaoh* and upon the *Egyptians*; and it is written for our Admonition and Warning, upon whom the Ends of the World are come. They were guilty of oppressing and persecuting the Church of GOD. And tho' for a considerable Time GOD suffer'd the Rod of the Wicked to rest upon the Lot of his People, He at length compassionated their Sorrows.

Impressions made by Judgments

Sorrows, made bare His Arm for their Deliverance, and rendred Vengeance to their Adversaries. He did not allow that unhappy Prince, who was the Author of the Persecution, and that miserable Nation concern'd in the Sin, to go unpunish'd. He bro't upon them ten miraculous Plagues, which were Fore-runners of their Overthrow in the Red Sea by which He gave them Warning of the Danger they were in; and if they had taken the Warning, repented and given Glory to God, they might have escaped Ruin.

IN this Chapter are set down three of these fearful Plagues. We have one of them mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, namely, that of turning the Waters into Blood, which was the first of the ten. The second is that of the *Frogs*, from the first to the fifteenth Verse of this Chapter. This Judgment is first threatned, then inflicted. He admonisheth *Pharaoh*, before He lets his Rod fall upon him: So slow is God to punish, and so desirous of our Amendment without Punishment, *Exod. 8. 1---6. And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with Frogs. And the River shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up, and come into thine house, and into thy bed-chamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-troughs. And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants. And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt.*

Now

Now in the Verses of our Text we have the Frame, Temper & Carriage of *Pharaoh*, while he was under this Judgment, and when it was remov'd.

1. WE are told what Effect this Judgment had upon *Pharaoh* while it was upon him, (verse 8.) *Then Pharaoh called for Moses & Aaron, and said, intreat the Lord for me, &c.* He began to relent now, tho' he did not under the former Judgment. ~~And it was the first time that he did so.~~ He slighted the Threatning, but found he cou'd not bear the Infliction. He bid Defiance to God before, now he is glad to intreat him; and desirous to engage the Prayers of those Servants of God for him, whose Messages he had despised. And now he makes Promises of Amendment and Obedience, if God wou'd grant him Deliverance. *I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord.*

2. WE are told how he carried *after the Judgment* was remov'd. When *Moses & Aaron* went from the Presence of *Pharaoh*, they cried to the Lord, and he removed the Frogs at their Prayer; they died out of their Houses, and out of their Villages, and out of their Fields: And they gather'd them together upon Heaps, and the Land stank, till they were removed from off the Face of it. Well, but did *Pharaoh* do as he had said? No indeed, much otherwise. He broke his Promises, & persisted in his Sin: Was as bad or worse then he was before. (v. 15.) *When he saw that there was Respite*, without considering what he had lately felt, or what he had reason to fear, *he hardened his heart, and hearkned not unto Moses and Aaron*, in what they spake to him from the Lord.

AND now there are several Observations which I wou'd offer from these Words, as being not unsutable to this remarkable Time.

I. OBS.

I. OBSERV. GOD can soon bring down the stoutest Sinners, and force them to a Submission to Him.

WHAT a proud & insolent Sinner was this Pharaoh? The haughty Monarch at first bid defiance to the great GOD, as if he were a Match for Him, yea, as if he were greater then He. When Moses & Aaron at first went in to him, and told him; *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go that they may hold a feast unto me in the Wilderness.* Pharaoh answer'd them, *Who is the Lord, that I shou'd obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go,* *Exod. 5. 1, 2.* But how does he change his Note in the Text? *Intreat the Lord for me, and I will let the people go to do sacrifice to him.*

How was that wicked King Ahab made to humble himself, and put on the Garb & Guise of a Penitent? When the Prophet told him what Judgments God would bring upon his House, *He rent his cloths, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.* So that God said to *Elijah, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me?* Tho' after all the Submission was forc'd, the Humiliation fained; *1 Kin. 21. latter end.*

THE great Nebuchadnezzar how low was he made to stoop, till he came to that Acknowledgment, *The Lord ruleth, all his works are truth, and his ways Judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase,* *Dan. 4. 22, 37.*

ALAS! 'Tis vain for any of us to think of standing it out against God. No Mortal is a Match for Him. Yea, tho' all the Creatures in Heaven & Earth united their strength, and joined in Confederacy, they cou'd not resist Him. He is wise in Heart, and mighty in Strength, none ever hardned themselves against Him and prospered. Sooner or later the proudest Sinners will come to *Julians Acknowledgement, Thou hast overcome.*

YEA,

YEA, such is the Power of God, that He can overcome the *greatest Sinners* by the most *despicable Means*. As in this Chapter he humbles *Pharaohs* Pride, and chastises his Insolence, by some of the most contemptible parts of the Creation, *Frogs, and Lice, and Flies*.

WHAT a Mortification, (says one upon the place,) must it needs be to this haughty Monarch, to see himself bro't to his Knees; and forc'd to submit by such despicable Means? Every Child is ordinarily able to deal with those Invaders, and can triumph over them, yet now so numerous are their Troops, & so vigorous their Assaults, that Pharaoh with all his Chariots and Horsemen cou'd make no head against them. Thus he *poureth contempt upon Princes* that offer Contempt to Him & his Sovereignty, and makes those who will not own Him above them, to know that when He pleases, he can make the meanest Creature to insult them, and trample upon them.

God could have plagued Pharaoh & the Egyptians with Lions, or Bears, or Wolves, or with Vultures, or Birds of Prey, but he chose to do it by these contemptible Instruments, that his own Power might be the more magnified, & Pharaohs Pride the more abased.

LET us then learn to stand in Awe of this God. Say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works? Thro' the greatness of thy power, shall thine enemies submit themselves to thee. He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations, let not the rebellious exalt themselves*. Let us bow down our selves to him, lest we are broken before him! Oh let us not make God our Enemy! Let us not provoke the Lord to Anger, as if we were stronger than He!

† Henry in loc.

* Psal. 66. 3, 7.

Impressions made by Judgments

It was a good Caution of wise Gamaliel, Acts. 5. 39. *Lest haply ye be found even to fight against God :* For this will be not only a fruitless, but a dangerous Attempt. *Wo to him that strives with his Maker :* For he will not only be overcome as an impotent Enemy, but severely reckon'd with as a Rebel and Traytor to his rightful Prince. That Parable which our Saviour deliver'd to his Disciples is applicable here, Luke 14. 31, 32. *Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.*

If we think to stand it out against God, we shall surely perish in the Attempt. Let us then immediately lay down the Weapons of our Rebellion, and accept the Offers of Peace which he makes us. The great God gives us a Challenge, then offers us Peace. Isa. 27. 4, 5. *Fury is not in me: who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I will burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.*

II. OBSERV. *A day of Calamity and Distress will teach such the need of Prayer as before neglected and disus'd it.*

PHARAOH under this Judgment is for trying Prayer: He flies to it as a needful Expedient in his present Difficulties. Indeed we dont read of his praying himself. But he beg'd the Prayers of those Servants of God *Moses & Aaron*; He call'd for them, and said, *Pray unto the Lord for me, and for my people.* Not long since he had proudly said, *Who is the*

the Lord, now he acknowledgeth that his Help must come from Him.

THUS does a Time of Trouble & Distress, of Fear Danger, extort an Acknowledgment of God from such as before denied & defied him; and open their Mouths to pray for themselves, or to beg the Prayers of others for them, that before neglected Prayer and despis'd it. *

NATURE in Extremities has irresistible Workings; and even *that* without Grace, will at such a Time open the mouth to pray that before was shut, Isa. 26. 16. *Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastning was upon them.* The Psalmist observes of the *Seamen*, who are mostly a prayerless Generation of Men, that in a Storm and Tempest, when they mount up to Heaven, and go down again to the Depths, and are at their Wits End, *Then they will cry to the Lord*, Psal. 107. 28. So the Mariners with *Jonah*, when that mighty Tempest arose, were afraid, and *cried every man to his God*. And the *Ship-Master* himself came to him, and said, *What meanest thou, O Sleeper? Arise and call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not*, Jonah 1. 5, 6.

* So the Historian informs us, how the *Persian Messenger* in his Narrative to the King, of the Overthrow of his Army by the *Grecians*, related that those Gallants who before the Fight, in the midst of their Cups and Bravery, denied GOD and Providence as secure of Victory, yet afterwards when furiously pursued by their Enemies, they came to the River *Strymon*, that was frozen and began to thaw, then upon their knees they mournfully implor'd the Favour of GOD, that the Ice might hold, and give them safe passage over from the Pursuers.

Who of *Us* was there that did not lift up a Prayer in the late awful Night, when God made the Earth to tremble & reel under our Feet, and our Houses to shake & totter over our Heads, and we fear'd lest we should go down quick into the Pit? What flocking was there of all sorts of Persons to the publick Prayers of the next Day & Evening? You were then ready to say to your Ministers, as *Pharaoh* here to *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Intreat the Lord for us*. Many ran in haste to the House of God then, that (I doubt) contentedly staid at Home the Day before : And none complain'd the Exercises were too long, tho' they lasted several Hours ; but on the contrary many would have been glad to have continued them all Night.

WELL then, since we shall, sooner or later, be convinc'd of the Need of Prayer, *let us all practice it now !* I have spoken this not to condemn or upbraid praying in a time of Fear & Extremity : No, it would shew dreadful Obstinacy & Impiety indeed not to pray then. But I have said this, as *Christ* spake his Parable, *Luke 18.1. To the end, that men shou'd pray always*. It is sad to have Prayer to *begin* in a time of Extremity. We shall pray at such a time with the more Confidence & Comfort, if we have been us'd to pray before. If we don't pray in a time of *Ease*, God may justly refuse to hear us in a time of *Extremity*. This is but agreeable to that awful Threatning, *Prov. 1. 24, --- 28. Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretch'd out my hand, and no man regarded ; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof : I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh ; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer ; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.*

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SINNERS will pray & intreat in the Judgment of the great Day: They will beg Mercy then, if they never did before, Mat, 25. 11. *Lord, Lord open to us.* But the Answer to be given to them follows in the next Verse, *Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.* As much as to say, "You did not call upon me before, and I shall not hear you now: You are too late in your seeking of me"

OH then! Let such as have hitherto restrain'd Prayer before God; either in their Closets or in their Families, set upon the Practice of both. And let such as do pray, continue therein; *Praying always, with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all Perseverance.* Happy is it for them whom Affliction and Judgment of any Kind finds praying.

III. OBSERV. *PROMISES and Resolutions made in Times of Extremity, are commonly afterwards forgotten and broken.*

PHARAOH here promises very fair, and seems to be in a good Frame, while the Judgment was upon him. *Intreat the Lord for me, and I will let the people go, that they may serve him.* And yet no sooner was the Judgment remov'd, but he broke his Promise, and refus'd to let the people go.

IN times of Sicknes, what Resolutions do people make, what Purposes have they in themselves, to amend their Ways, and turn to the Lord; and they'll promise with Tears, and many external Signs of Sincerity; so that they seem to others, and verily think within themselves, that they promise in good earnest, and mean to do as they speak; but when Health is restor'd, and they think the Bitterness of Death is past; all is forgotten, and they return to their old Sins, as *the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

AND

AND tis the same in other Cases of Fear & Danger. So it was with *Israel* when God came down upon *Mount Sinai*, and the whole mount quaked greatly. Then they made very fair Promises of Obedience. They said to *Moses*, Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall speak to thee, **AND WE WILL HEAR IT AND DO IT.** And God heard the voice of their Words, and said, *I have heard the voice of the words of this people, and they have well said all that they have spoken*, Deu. 5.27,28. But God was so well acquainted with the Treachery and Deceitfulness of their Hearts, that he had little Dependence upon their fair Promises, and therefore adds that Wish of Doubt & Distrust in the next Verse, *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my Commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their Children for ever!* The Deceitfulness of Mens Hearts doth eminently appear in this, in being forward to purpose in themselves, and promise to God, but backward to perform.

OH then, let us be jealous over our selves with a godly jealousy! And let it be our care to live up to our religious Purposes & Promises! Having open'd our Mouths to the Lord, let us not go back! Having sworn let us be careful to perform, and to keep God's righteous Judgments!

SAY! What were thy Purposes, what thy Resolutions, under the Impressions of the late shaking Dispensation of God's Providence? What did you think then? What did you resolve upon? Did not Conscience then charge you with the Neglect of some *Commanded Duties*, and with the Practice of some *forbidden Evils*; and did you not then resolve, that if God gave you a Respite, you would perform the one, and avoid the other?

O ungodly Sinner! Had you no Purposes of speedily forsaking your Sins, and your former evil Companions, and turning unto the Lord?

O loose Professor! Did not you determine within your self, that you would order your Conversation better then you had done, and walk more holily before God? That you would be more with God in your Closets, and serve him better in your Houses; keep better Orders, and better Hours; that you would be more strict in sanctifying God's Sabbaths; that you would mind the World less, and Heaven more, and give greater diligence to make your Calling and Election sure?

Deal plainly and truly with thy self; and don't now go to smother or evade the matter! Were there not some such Tho'ts, and Purposes, and Resolutions as these in thy Heart? If not, tis a Sign of a hard Heart, and a seared Conscience. *Pharaoh* himself was not so hardned as this comes to. And you have need to tremble at your own Obduracy. But if thou hadst, (and the God of Heaven knows if thou hadst, and let thy own Conscience be the Witness!) then perform what thy Heart did purpose. I am perswaded, if People would live according to the Purposes of their Hearts in the time of their Fears, if they would reform and amend as they did then resolve to do, we should be much better than we were before..

But Oh! The Danger is that the Convictions will wear off, and the Purposes be broken! Lest our Goodness will be as the morning cloud, and as the early Dew that goeth away. And it will be so till the Heart is renewed by the grace of God. "Till the Disposition of the Air is changed, what thaws in in the Sun, will freeze again in the Shade".

LET

LET us then beg of God to come down in the renewing Influences of his Spirit and Grace upon our Souls; to fulfill to us that Promise, Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

LET us also frequently call to Mind our Purposes and Resolutions, and be often renewing of them. What we have purpos'd and promis'd, let us be so far from revoking, as to purpose and promise it over and over again.

AND then let us frequently call our selves to Account, whether we dont live contrary to our Purposes and Promises, or at least below 'em.

LET us press our Hearts with the Evil & Danger of coming short: And think within our selves that if we don't now live answerable to our Promises, it will be aggravated Impiety, double Iniquity. That this is to mock God, yea to lie to him. The fearful Instance of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* may be remembred by us for our Warning in this Case, Acts 5. 3, 4, 5. *And Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart, to lie to the holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words, fell down and gave up the Ghost.*

Finally,

LET us be much in Prayer to G O D for Grace and Strength to perform our Purposes and Resolutions.

Resolutions. It is our Duty to resolve, but the Strength to perform is not in our selves, but in God; and must be fetch'd in from Him by frequent and fervent Prayer. Purposes without Prayer will come to Nothing. *David* resolves and prays together, in Psal. 119. 8. *I will keep thy Statutes, Oh forsake me not utterly!*

IV. OBSERV. WICKED Men are many times worse, rather than better, after the Removal of Affliction and Judgments.

THEY still continue in their *old* Sins, and will not be reformed; and many times practice them more than before, abound in them rather than turn from them. Thus *Israel* upon every new Deliverance *Sinned still*, (Psal. 78. 32.) as if they had *been delivered to do all these Abominations*, Jer. 7. 10. And thus *Tyre*, after seventy Years Captivity, *returns to her former Hire*, Isa. 23. 17. And as they commonly relapse into their old Sins, so they many times run into *new* ones. Thus *Israel*, when they were delivered from *Egypt*, began to worship new God's, *which neither they nor their Fathers had known*, Jer. 19. 4. And *Judah* when newly return'd from Captivity in *Babylon*, fell a marrying *Strange Wives*, Ezra 10. 2. And they are many times more *hardned* in Sin after the Removal of Judgment; Sin with less Fear and Remorse, as well as more Frequency. Thus *Pharaoh*, upon every Respite *hardned his heart*, and grew more and more obstinate.

AND the Reason is, Because tho' the Judgment is remov'd, the Heart remains unchang'd. It is not in the Nature or Power of Affliction and Judgment, let it be what it will, of it self to change the Heart, and give a new Byass to that; or to mortifie Corruption, so as that when we are freed from the Affliction, we

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shall be free from that also. And that Corruption which Affliction doth not cure, it doth at best but curb : And when that Curb is taken away in a Deliverance, the Corruption commonly vents it self more fully and freely. And then as the Affliction was but a Curb, so the Deliverance commonly proves a *Snare*, and adds Fuel to the Flame.

LET *Us* then be warned of *our* Danger, of being worse rather than better, after that great Deliverance which the Lord hath lately granted us. We trust God means saving Good to some, I hope to *many*, by the Threatning and the Deliverance. But what Reason is there to fear, that while some are melted by it, others will be hardned ; and that many that were unjust before, will be unjust still ; that were filthy before, will be filthy still ; that were stupid, prayerless, and profane before, will be so still ? Yea that many, because Sentence against their evil Works was not executed *that Night*, will have their Hearts fully set in them to do evil ? What we see already, gives us Reason to apply to this Providence, the Words that were spoken to *Daniel*, by the Man clothed in Linnen (Chap. 12. v. 10.) *Many shall be purified and made white : but the Wicked shall do wickedly.*

LET it therefore be consider'd here, If any of us are not the better, but the worse, after such a Deliverance as this,

It will be high *Ingratitude*. Our Life is the dearest Thing we have in the World ; for *Skin for Skin, yea, all that a man has, will he give for his Life.* And hath not God spared us *this* ? Kept us alive that we should not go down to the Pit ? And is this thy Thanks to him, to dishonour him more, and provoke him more ? *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise ? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee ? Hath he not made thee, and preserv'd thee ?*

THIS

THIS is vilely to abuse the *Mercy* of God. You are at this Time the living Monuments of his Mercy, and Witnesses for God that he is gracious. Mercy spar'd Thee (O Sinner!) in the Minute of thy Danger and Terror, and rejoiced against Judgment. In that awful Moment there was, (as it were) a Struggle, and Debate, between Justice & Mercy. Justice urg'd that you might be given up to Destruction, that the Sentence against you should be immediately executed. You may conceive *Justice* then pleading against you after this Manner, "Lord, this Sinner has stood a great while under thy Patience! He has refus'd many Calls, and slighted many Warnings already! Thou hast made quick Work with many others, who have not sinn'd against Thee so much, nor provok'd Thee so long! --- Shall I then now give the fatal Blow, and send him down to his own Place?" At that critical Moment *Mercy* step'd in, and urg'd its moving Pleas in your behalf, "Lord! Dont give him up yet! Try him once again! He was never warn'd after this manner before: It may be he will take the warning, and, if he has some further Space granted him, will now repent and reform!" And *Mercy* carried it. Its Pleading was heard, and prov'd effectual to move the Heart, and stay the Hand of God, at that Time. Don't think this a fanciful Representation of the Case. Tho' this is spoken after the Manner of Men, yet there is a great Reality in it: For so the blessed God represents himself, as having a mighty Struggle in his own Breast concerning *Israel*, in those wondrous and most melting Words of His, (Hosea 11. 8, 9.) *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine Anger, for I am God, and not Man. --- And this Mercy of God, (O Sinner!) is the Attribute thou intendest hereafter to appeal to;*

It is what thou still hopest in: But (know it !) if you continue in Sin, and grow more wicked after you have been thus spar'd, Mercy it self will turn against you, and that which has spar'd you now, will not spare you hereafter. Abused Mercy will at length deliver you up into the hands of incensed Justice, to deal with you according to your Sins.

Again,

THIS is dreadfully to slight the *Wrath & Anger* of God. Have you not seen the Displeasure of God? Has he not pass'd before you in awful Terror as well as in great Mercy? Psal. 18. 7. *Then the Earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the Hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.* Psal. 60. 1, 2. *O God! Thou hast been displeas'd: Thou hast made the Earth to tremble.* Was his Displeasure against the Sea, that it was troubled? Or against the Land, that it trembled? Or against our Houses, that they moved and were shaken? No; but against You the guilty Inhabitants. And will you then continue in Sin, and grow worse in it, as if you would bid Defiance to God, when His Anger is kindled? The Voice of God in the EARTHQUAKE, to Sinners of all Sorts, was this, " Repent and turn from all your Transgressions. " And if you still persist in them, your Language is like insolent Pharaoh's, " Who is the Lord, that I should obey his Voice, to let my Sins go? You do as good as say, " Let God do his Pleasure, I will have mine. "

THIS adds *Incorrigibleness* to thy former Wickedness; and may provoke God to hasten thy Destruction in some other Way. You may well say to your selves in this Case, as *Ezra* in his Prayer, (Chap. 9. 13, 14.) *And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great Trespas, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve, and hast given us such Deliverance as this: should we*
again

again break thy Commandments, --- wouldst not thou be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us?

OH impenitent Sinner ! If you go on still in your Trespases, what can you expect, but that this awful Threatning is only a Fore-runner of some other sudden Destruction ? Don't say now with Agag, (1 Sam. 15. 32.) *Surely the bitterness of Death is past* ; lest you deceive your self as he did. The Judgment may rise up a second Time, and destroy. You are in as much Danger now, as you were a Moment before the late fearful Shock. And to make you sensible of this, God is even still shaking the Land in some Places. And how soon he may give the fatal Blow to those who will not be warn'd, He only knows. ----- Or God hath other Arrows in his Quiver. If *one Wo is past*, another may come quickly. He can take the wicked away by some other Judgment, *before your pots can feel the thorns, as with a Whirlwind*, suddenly and irresistably, *both living and in his Wrath*, Psal. 58. 9. Therefore because there is Wrath, beware lest he take you away with a Stroke, then a great Ransom cannot deliver you.

OH ! that we could prevail with such as are 'going on still in their Trespases, to make a Stand, a Pause, --- and to consider seriously within themselves, how aggravated their Guilt, & how encreased their Danger will be, if their Lives are not now reformed. And then to resolve within themselves, that they will, by the Grace of God, forsake their evil Practices, and break off their Sins by Righteousness. And having made such a Resolution, to set themselves in the Strength of Christ to perform it ; and to endeavour to be as good as they have been bad, as holy as they have been wicked, as eminent for Piety as they have been exemplary for Iniquity.

BUT I come to a

V. OBSERV.

V. OBSERV. GOD is pleased sometimes to remove Judgments from, and grant a Respite to, such as he knows will not make a good use of, but on the contrary abuse his Patience and Mercy.

So GOD remov'd this Judgment from *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians, tho' he knew *Pharaoh* wou'd not fulfill his Promises, but persist in his Obstinacy, and be as bad and worse than before. When *Pharaoh* saw that there was Respite, he hardned his heart, and hearkned not unto them, as the Lord had said. GOD knew that he would not, and had told *Moses* so before, (Chap. 7. 4.) So that GOD was not disappointed in his Expectations. And thus GOD turned away his Anger from the *Israelites* many a time, tho' he knew they would sin yet more against him.

GOD may do thus from several Considerations.

SOMETIMES it is for his own Name's sake. This GOD is pleas'd to give as the Reason of his Favour to his sinful people, (Ezek. 36. 22.) Thus saith the Lord GOD, I do not this for your sake, O House of Israel, but for mine holy Names sake, --- Sometimes he does it that his Name may be Magnified. GOD has proclaimed his Name, The Lord, The Lord GOD, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Exod. 34. 1. And He thus acts, that it may appear this Name belongs to him; that it may be manifested and magnified before others: To make it evident, that as His Name, such is His Nature; that Mercy pleases him more than Judgment.--- Sometimes he does it that his Name may not be blasphemed. If executing Judgments upon his People, will occasion Reproach to his Name, he oft forbeareth them, moderates and refrains his Judgments upon that Account, Deut. 32. 26, 27. I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among

among men: Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this. *Isai. 48. 9, 11.* For my names sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another. *Joshua* and others knew this was a Strong Plea, and accordingly us'd it, *What wilt thou do for thy great Name?* *Josh. 7. 9.*

SOMETIMES GOD hath Respect to the *Ancestors* of a People, or to some former *Act* of theirs with which he was well pleased; and on that Account spares them, and is favourable to them. The People of *Israel* had great Favour shewn them many a time on this Account. God said of them, (*Lev. 26. 44, 45.*) *I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly. But I will remember the Covenant of their Ancestors, whom I bro't forth out of the Land of Egypt. Verse 42. I will remember my Covenant with Jacob, and also my Covenant with Isaac, and also my Covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the Land. And again He gives this as a Reason of his Favour to them, (Jer. 2. 2.) I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.*

SOMETIMES it is in *Answer to the Prayers of his own People.* The People of God they pray & plead for Sinners; for the Sinners among whom they dwell, and for a Sinful World; that God would spare 'em, and turn away his Anger from them. And God many times hears their Prayers and Cries to him, and turns from the fierceness of his Anger, removes his Judgments,

ments, and grants 'em a Respite. So this, and the other Plagues successively, were removed from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, at the Intercession of Moses and Aaron. The 12, & 13. ver. of our Context, *And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh: and Moses cried unto the Lord, because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses: and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields.* So we are told God would have destroy'd Israel, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his Wrath, Psal. 105. 23. The wicked little think, how much their Preservations and Deliverances, are owing to the Prayers and Instructions of God's Servants in their Behalf. Had there been ten such Intercessors in Sodom, it had been spared. Isa. 1. 1. *Were it not that the Lord had left a small Remnant, we had been as Sodom, we had been like unto Gomorrah.*

Again,

God may do thus for the sake of some of his *Elect* who are yet *unconverted*, or yet *unborn*. It may be there are some of God's *Elect*, who will make a good Use of the Respite, and be led to Repentance by the Removal of the Judgment, tho' the most will be hardened by it, and Sin against his Patience: And as God has ordain'd these unto Life, so he has ordain'd this to be the effectual Means of bringing them to that Conversion and Repentance which is unto Life. ----- Or it may be there are some of his *Elect* yet *unborn*, who are to proceed from the Loins of those whom he now spares, and grants a Respite to. If God should make *quick Work* with, or a *full End* of the Sinners of the Earth, whence should many of his *Elect* rise? There are (says Mr. Flavel) "Thousands of God's *Elect* in the Loins of his Enemies. Many that will

will heartily embrace Christ, must rise from such as reject him. And therefore 'tis, that many Sinners are so spar'd and deliver'd as they are, from Time to Time. The Lord suffers many a wicked Parent to stand for a Time under his Patience, because Children are to spring from them, who will obey and embrace that Christ whom their wicked Parents rejected. Where had good *Abijah* and *Hezekiah* been, if wicked *Jeroboam* and *Ahaz* had been cut off in their first Transgressions?" Furthermore,

God sometimes grants a Respite to Sinners because they are not fully ripe for Destruction. Sinners are sometimes spar'd, as the Ox is spar'd because not yet fit for the Shambles. Thus God exercis'd Patience towards the *Amorites* till their Iniquity was full, Gen. 15. 16. And hence our Saviour said to the wicked *Jews*, (Mat. 23. 32.) *Fill ye up then the measure of your Fathers.* So that Judgments are sometimes remov'd in Judgment, & a Respite granted in Wrath, only that Sinners may grow more fit for Destruction, and treasure up more Wrath against the Day of Wrath.

Once more,

God grants a Respite to Sinners to clear his Justice in their final Destruction. The Patience and Long-suffering of God, will take away all Pleas & Apologies out of the Mouths of Sinners, and will render God clear in his judging, when he brings upon them Wrath to the uttermost. This will bring the Blood of Sinners upon their own Heads, and render God and his Throne clear and spotless, when He shall say, (as in Rev. 2. 21.) *I gave them space to repent, and they repented not.* Then how dreadful soever the Sentence is at last, Men and Angels must applaud it, and say, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, in judging thus.*

BUT I come to the 6th and last Observation.

VI. OBSERV. IT is a most awful Sign, a most fearful Symptom, when any, instead of being better, are worse after Judgments and Deliverances, than they were before.

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It looks as if God had mark'd 'em out for utter Ruin as he did Pharaoh, and would soon bring it upon them, as he did upon him. There is not a blacker Mark of *Reprobation* than this, nor a surer Sign of *Destruction*. God himself speaks of such, as if he did not know what to do with them. He speaks of 'em as tho' they were hopeless and helpless in their Sin and Misery. Isa. 1. 5. *Why should you be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.* As if God had said, Why should I take any more Pains with you? You are past Cure, and therefore past Care. Awful are those Words, Ezek. 24. 13, 14. *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee. I the Lord have spoken it, it shall come to pass, and I will do it. I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according to thy doings shall they judge thee, saith the Lord God.* God had sought to purge, i. e. reform them, by the Judgments he had bro't upon them; but they were not purged, not reformed. Therefore the Lord gave them up, and resolv'd to use no more Means with them, but to cause his Fury to rest upon them, to bring upon them Judgments, not for Probation but for Destruction.

THIS is a Sign, not only of temporal, but of everlasting *Destruction*; that God will cause his Fury to rest upon them in the other World, never to be taken off. Rom. 2. 5. *Thou by thy hard and impenitent heart, dost treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.*

THE Destruction of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, was typical of the final Ruin of all impenitent Sinners. As they were drown'd in the Red Sea, so shall these be cast into the Lake of Fire, Rev. 20. 14.

Oh then! Hear the Word of God this Day and remble at it. Prov. 29. 1. *He that being often reproved,*

ved, hardneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

I Conclude now with two awful Texts of Scripture, Deut. 29. 18,----21. *Lest there should be among you man or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood. And it come to pass when he heareth the words of this curse, that he blefs himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenness to thirst: The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord shall separate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant, that are written in this book of the law: Psal. 95. 3,4,8,---11. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. ---- To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways. Unto whom I swear in my Wrath, that they should not enter into my Rest.*

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